

ANGER MANAGEMENT AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

PURPOSE/GOAL: To increase participants' awareness of anger styles and ways to manage anger in a positive manner.

OBJECTIVES: To assist participants in identifying their own personal anger style.

To identify specific anger-management skills.

INTRODUCTION

Anger is a normal human emotion – one that everyone experiences. All people have a right to their anger and a responsibility to manage it effectively. Anger can mobilize us to take action, and getting to know the symptoms can help us to recognize our anger.

The symptoms of anger affect us physically, emotionally, and behaviorally. Physically, some people may grit their teeth, become red faced, or generally feel tense. Emotionally, some may feel like running away, while others may feel more like fighting. Behaviorally, people may become abusive, use mood-altering substances, and may cry, yell, or scream. All of these symptoms are “normal” and let us know that perhaps we need to work on the skills we need to develop as our personal anger-management techniques.

DEALING WITH ANGER

Define anger, describe some symptoms of anger and review some styles of anger. Act out some potential unit/office/social scenarios.

Some people tend to “stuff” their anger – they may deny their anger or not realize that they have a right to their anger. Basically, this is a passive way of dealing with anger. Some reasons people stuff anger are fears of losing control, feeling that is not okay to be angry, and fearing that they will be rejected if people knew they are angry.

Another style of dealing with anger is “escalating,” and this is an aggressive style. These individuals tend to blame others for provoking them, and this style may lead to situations that are abusive. Some reasons that

people engage in this style are to present an image of being in control and having power, feelings that all choices have been eliminated, and using the escalation of anger to avoid the expression of other emotions.

Have participants identify events that make them angry and how they react to the anger they experience.

Have participants examine their own anger style and how they can become better at anger management.

Managing anger involves expressing anger in an open, honest, and direct manner. This style better allows us to use the anger to move us in positive directions. Most of us need to develop skills that enable us to do this. Some examples of these skills include reminding ourselves that anger is normal and that it is okay to be angry, remembering not to attack or blame the other person, look for possible ways to compromise, focus on the specific issues that made us angry, and remembering to avoid behavior that we will regret at a later time.

Some additional anger management techniques include talking to someone who will be objective, using positive self-talk (telling ourselves that we are able to choose our anger style), or choosing constructive methods such as physical exercise or writing a letter to the person we're angry with (we can destroy the letter, save it, or mail it at a later date).

Anger management requires that we recognize our values and the meanings we place on anger. When we are able to positively manage our anger, we develop more effective communication skills,

increase our energy level, and boost our self-esteem. We also need to recognize that we may be powerless over the situation and be able and willing to accept it. It is helpful to stay focused on the present and remember that not only is it okay to be angry, it is okay to let it go.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

What is conflict resolution? It is learning to settle disagreements or conflicts peacefully. Conflict resolution means working things out without fighting or hurting the feelings of others, without running away from difficult situations, and without going against your feelings or beliefs. Knowing how to handle conflicts in a positive way can help you stay safe from violence, learn to respect others, and feel good about yourself. Conflict resolution is a way to turn a situation into a WIN-WIN.

Problems **can** be solved peacefully.

- Calm down. Stop arguing, name calling, etc. If necessary, take time out to cool off.
- Identify the problem, being as specific as possible.
- Think of possible solutions together. Brainstorm ideas, even those that may seem silly or unrealistic.
- Weigh every idea, keeping in mind the results or consequences of those solutions. What will happen if we do this? Will we both get what we need? Who else will be impacted by what we decide?
- Decide upon a plan of action and implement it. After some time, get back together and decide if it is working. If not, come up with another solution.